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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES WASHINGTON-WABASH CTA STATION PROJECT REACHES A MILESTONE WITH RE-OPENING OF SECTION OF WABASH FROM WASHINGTON STREET TO MADISON**

*Station Project Will Create New Gateway to Millennium Park and the Loop; Due to Open in Early Summer*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) announced today that the Washington-Wabash CTA Station project has reached a major milestone with the re-opening of Wabash Avenue, which had been closed to traffic from Washington to Madison Streets to allow for construction staging.

"The re-opening of Wabash represents real progress in our push to give the east side of the Loop a beautiful, modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century elevated station that we can all be proud of," Mayor Emanuel said. "We thank all the merchants along Jewelers' Row who have been open for business and bearing with us during this construction process. We are just a few months away from opening up the new station that will create a fully accessible gateway to the Loop and all the attractions in Millennium Park."

The new station will replace two stations that date to 1896: the station at Randolph and Wabash, and the station at Madison and Wabash that was demolished before work started on the new station. The new Washington-Wabash Elevated CTA Station, scheduled to open in early summer, serve the Brown, Green, Orange, Pink and Purple lines that travel on the Loop elevated tracks. It will be the first station on the east side of the Loop to be fully ADA accessible, equipped with elevators to the mezzanine and station levels.

The new \$75 million station is fully federally funded through Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.

"CDOT is grateful to the many business owners on Jeweler's Row who have worked with us to mitigate the impacts of this project on their customers," CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld said. "We are very glad to be bringing this project into the home stretch."

The undulating wave form of the canopies weaves through the historic Wabash Avenue corridor as a counterpoint to the city grid, and anticipates the soft forms of the park and the lake beyond. The faceted skeletal steel and glass structure is designed to create a dynamic play of light reminiscent of diamond facets and the historic Jeweler's Row.

Materials have been chosen to allow visibility, reinforce the feeling of openness and to allow a visual connection to the historical corridor. The vibrant new facility will enhance passenger convenience, improve train speeds, decrease operating costs and provide accessibility for all riders.

CDOT worked closely during the planning process and during construction to accommodate the needs and concerns of the affected businesses.

Among actions CDOT took in response to the concerns that were raised were to increase the amount of valet parking spots created to serve customers of Jewelers' Row. In addition, the construction canopies and barriers were designed to be well-lit and spacious to encourage foot traffic, and ample wayfinding signage was installed around the neighborhood to clearly indicate that businesses remained open during construction.

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